(c) whether it has come to the notice of Government that presently iron ore is being exported from Chennai through Bellary, Guntakal, Secunderabad; and

(d) whether to reduce the cost of transportation, Government would take up Kottur-Harihar rail line project on priority, as it is economically viable?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The latest anticipated cost of the project is Rs. 120.29 crores.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) the work has already been taken up and will be progressed and completed as per availability of resources in the coming years.

Decreased Transportation by Railways

1812. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether transportation of coal, cement, steel and iron ore by Railways decreased over the last two years;

(b) if so, what are the main reasons for the same; and

(c) whether the Ministry has any plan to negotiate with these sectors and retain and increase transportation of the above sectors?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Figures of loading of coal cement, steel and iron ore for the period April—January of the years 1997-98, 1998-99 and 1999-2000 are given below:—

REVENUE FREIGHT LOADING

(*in Million tonnes*)

Commodity	**April to January**		
	1997-98	**1998-99**	**1999-2000**
Coal	171.36	162.42	170.99
Cement	30.52	29.07	35.26
Steel	9.52	8.78	9.47
Iron Ore	40.68	39.34	40.87

From the above it is seen that during April-January, 1999-2000, a positive growth over last year has been witnessed in movement of all commodities including coal, cement, steel and iron ore. However, movement of coal and steel has been slightly lower than the loading achieved during April—January, 1997-98.

(b) Cyclones in Orissa, imports of coal and recession in steel industry has been responsible for the shortfall in loading level of coal and steel during 1999-2000.

(c) Ministry of Railways is maintaining continuous and close liaison both with the rail-user organisations as well as the concerned Ministries/ Departments for maximising movement of traffic by rail. Also close monitoring is being done both at the field level as well as at the Railway Ministry level to ensure smooth movement of freight traffic. Besides this, aggressive marketing strategies have been adopted by Railways to give support to rail traffic demand to increase the quantum of rail freight traffic.

Quantum of Passenger and Freight Subsidies

1813. MISS MABEL REBELLO:
SHRIMATI CHANDRESH KUMARI:
SHRI SURESH KALMADI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total quantum of passenger and freight subsidies, annually;

(b) whether it is a fact that rail services / subsidies are overwhelmingly consumed by non-poor; and

(c) what is the percentage of railway subsidy spent on below-poverty line population?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (c) Barring a few commodities, such as salt, sugarcane, fruits and vegetables, etc., which are carried below the cost of operation by an amount of Rs. 110 Cr., freight traffic in 1998-99 subsidised the movement of passenger services (excluding AC classes), and other coaching services to the extent of Rs. 2585.01 cr.

No statistics are being maintained in respect of the income particulars of consumers of Railway services.